

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
 - (i) providing a floor mat having a voice-responsive display device in a human-trafficked area;
 - (ii) receiving an utterance requesting information to be displayed on said voice-responsive display device;
 - (iii) processing said utterance to obtain said requested information; and
 - (iv) displaying said requested information on said voice-responsive display device.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said human-trafficked area is a retail store, and said requested information relates to the location of an item or items in said store.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying advertising information on said voice-responsive display device.

4. A system comprising:
a floor mat including a display device;
a sound-sensing device configured to detect an utterance by a person requesting information to be displayed on said display device; and
a speech recognition device coupled to said display device and said sound-sensing device, configured to process signals received from said sound-sensing device corresponding to said utterance, to generate a corresponding display on said display device.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein said sound-sensing device is a directional microphone.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein said directional microphone is embedded in said floor mat.

7. The system of claim 4, wherein said sound-sensing device comprises an array of microphones.

8. The system of claim 4, further comprising a sound-generating device coupled to said speech recognition device, for generating an audible response to said utterance.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein said sound-generating device is incorporated into said floor mat.

10. The system of claim 8, wherein said sound-generating device is piezoelectric flat panel speaker.

11. The system of claim 4, wherein said display relates to the location of an item or items in a store.

12. The system of claim 4, wherein said speech recognition device is wirelessly coupled to said sound-sensing device.

13. The system of claim 4, wherein said speech recognition device is coupled to said sound-sensing device by an optical fiber.

14. The system of claim 4, wherein said display device includes one of a liquid crystal display, a light-emitting diode display, an organic light-emitting diode display, an electroluminescent display, and a plasma display.

15. A method comprising:

- (i) arranging a floor mat including an electronically modifiable display in a retail store;
- (ii) arranging a microphone such that an utterance by a person standing near or on said floor mat is detectable by said microphone;
- (iii) using said microphone to convert said utterance to electrical signals;
- (iv) transmitting said signals to a speech recognition device coupled to said microphone;
- (v) using said speech recognition device to process said signals, to identify at least one word of said utterance;
- (vi) retrieving a location of an item corresponding to said word from an information database coupled to said speech recognition device; and
- (vii) displaying said location on said display.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein said microphone is a directional microphone.

17. The method of claim 15, further comprising generating an audible response to said utterance.

18. A cleaning system for cleaning the soles of a person's shoes, wherein said cleaning system includes:

- a display device;
- a sound-sensing device configured to detect an utterance by a person requesting information to be displayed on said display device; and
- a speech recognition device coupled to said display device and said sound-sensing device, configured to process signals received from said sound-sensing device corresponding to said utterance, to generate a corresponding display on said display device.

19. The cleaning system of claim 18, wherein said sound-sensing device is a directional microphone.

20. The cleaning system of claim 18, wherein said sound-sensing device comprises an array of microphones.

21. The cleaning system of claim 18, further comprising a sound-generating device coupled to said speech recognition device, for generating an audible response to said utterance.

22. The cleaning system of claim 18, wherein said display relates to the location of an item or items in a store.

23. The cleaning system of claim 18, wherein said display relates to advertising information.

24. The cleaning system of claim 18, wherein said display device includes one of a liquid crystal display, a light-emitting diode display, an organic light-emitting diode display, an electroluminescent display, and a plasma display.